

## Call conference 2012

### *Conference 'Design and Dynamics of Institutions for Collective Action'*

#### *in honour of Prof. Dr. Elinor Ostrom*

*November 29 - December 1, 2012, Utrecht University*

*Organizers: dr. Tine De Moor & Miguel Laborda Pemán.*

*Practical issues: René van Weeren*

*Opening key-note lecturer: Prof. Elinor Ostrom (2009 Nobel Prize Winner For Economics)*

*Conference website: [www.collective-action.info/conference-design-dynamics-icas](http://www.collective-action.info/conference-design-dynamics-icas)*

From the 29th of November until the 1st of December 2012 a three-day conference will be held at Utrecht University on the theme of the *Design and Dynamics of Institutions for Collective Action*. The conference will be held in honour of Prof. Dr. Elinor Ostrom. Elinor Ostrom's work has formed a major inspiration for all researchers of institutions for collective action. Both the 8 design principles, published in her book *Governing the commons. The evolution of institutions for collective action* (1990), as well as the Institutional Analysis and Development Framework developed by Ostrom and her colleagues at Indiana University have been applied in a wide range of studies on resource management and self-organized governance systems. For her analysis of economic governance, and in particular her work on commons, she received in 2009 the Nobel Prize Winner for Economics and she was recently included in *Time Magazine's* 2012 list of the "100 most influential people in the world". Prof. Ostrom will also be an honorary visiting professor at Utrecht University at the time of the conference, and will be giving a public lecture in the afternoon of the 29th of November, to which all conference participants will also be invited.

#### **The theme of the conference**

Institutions for collective action are institutional arrangements that are formed bottom-up by groups of people in order to overcome certain common problems over an extended period of time by setting certain rules regarding access to the group (membership), use of the resources and services the group owns collectively, and management of these resources and services. Self-governance and self-sanctioning are typical features of this kind of institutions (for more on the features of institutions for collective action, please see: <http://www.collective-action.info/>). The classic example of such institutions for collective action is the common, or a common pool institution, set up to govern natural resources. Commons could be found in the past all over Europe and are still to be found today contributing to the environmental and socio-economic sustainability of communities all over the world. However, apart from commons, many other organizations, ranging from medieval guilds to contemporary cooperatives, may also be regarded as institutions for collective action. The relevance of these institutional forms, both across history and in contemporary times, in industrialized societies as well as in less economically developed regions, as a way to cope with certain societal and environmental challenges, is being increasingly recognized by scholars and policy-makers.

A large part of the literature on institutions for collective action looks at the regulation of these institutions and how these can be “designed” in such a way that they are resilient enough to survive exogenous shocks and crises. European history, rich in commons, guilds and cooperatives as it is, offers an interesting laboratory to study such institutions and their way to deal with change in their political, economic and social environment over long periods of time. Central to this conference will be, then, the question how their regulation responds to the environment they function in and what makes them into dynamic and resilient institutions. Methodological aspects regarding how to analyze and compare institutions for collective action, and thus the methodology behind understanding the resilience of institutions for collective action (the so-called “grammar of institutions”) will also be an important focus in our discussions. With a strong emphasis on interdisciplinary research, we hope to find inspiration in various domains within history, sociology, economics, anthropology and political and organization sciences.

We therefore invite scholars from all social sciences, including history, to present papers on the design and long-term evolution of institutions for collective action in comparative perspective. Stress will be laid upon long-term comparative analyses, in a global perspective.

For specific issues several key-notes lecturers have been invited:

- Opening key-note lecture on the design and dynamics of institutions for collective action, by Prof. dr. Elinor Ostrom (Indiana University) [confirmed] (see <http://www.indiana.edu/~workshop/people/lostromcv.htm>)
- Key-note on the methodology to analyze the evolution of institutions for collective action, by Prof. dr. Marco Janssen (Arizona State University) [confirmed](see <http://www.public.asu.edu/~majansse/cv.pdf>)
- Key-note on the potential to apply our knowledge about the design of institutions for collective action within a developing context, by Prof. dr. Erwin Bulte (Wageningen University) [confirmed] (see <http://www.dec.wur.nl/UK/Staff/Bulte/>)
- Key-note on integrating knowledge from the analysis of the evolution and design of other forms of institutions in the field of institutions for collective action, by Prof. dr. Arjen Boin (Utrecht University) [confirmed] (see <http://www.uu.nl/rebo/medewerkers/RABoin>)
- Keynote on the design of cooperatives as institutions for collective action, by Prof. dr. Konrad Hagedorn (University of Berlin) [confirmed] (see <http://www.agrar.hu-berlin.de/fakultaet/departments/daoe/ress/mitarbeiter/Hagedorn>)

Among the questions that will be addressed are:

- **The regulation of institutions for collective action**, e.g.: How do rules evolve? What sanctioning systems are used? How is social control stimulated via regulation?
- **The dynamics of institutions for collective action**, e.g.: What explains institutions’ resilience and why do some fail? What is the role of institutional design? What is the role of internal malfunctioning, and when and why may it emerge? How do such institutions cope with supra-local forms of pressure and interference?
- **The emergence of institutions for collective action**, e.g.: What kind of problems do Institutions for collective action try to solve? What has been the role of

Institutions for collective action across history in contributing to environmental sustainability and communities' survival? Which role do they play in contemporary less-developed regions? Can Institutions for collective action contribute to reduce the risks of social and economic exclusion in times of economic crisis?

- **Institutions for collective action, the market and the state**, e.g. Which is the interaction between Institutions for collective action, top-down state management and markets? Are there complementarities between them or is it mainly a conflictive relationship? Can Institutions for collective action provide new ideas regarding the institutional re-design necessary for firms and states to cope with new 21st-century challenges?
- **Institutions for collective action and internal factors**, e.g. what is the influence of factors such as group size and group heterogeneity on the functioning of Institutions for collective action?
- **Institutions for collective action and external factors**. How do institutions for collective action interact with exogenous factors such as inheritance patterns, economic development (a.o. market integration), population pressure etc., e.g.: Which exogenous factors influence the emergence of such institutions? What is the effect of exogenous shocks on such institutions? Do crises (economic, social, environmental) have long-lasting effects on the regulation of institutions?

#### **Practical information:**

The conference will take place from *November 29 - December 1, 2012* in Utrecht (The Netherlands). The cost of accommodation and meals for selected paper presenters will be provided for by the organization; there will be no conference fee for selected paper presenters. A limited number of travel grants will be available for selected paper presenters (if you need a travel grant, please mention this when submitting the abstract). Paper proposals (of approx. 1,500 words) should be sent before the 1st of July. Please submit your abstract or show your interest in participating in this conference via <http://www.collective-action.info/ AGE UU 20121129 Participation>. For further practical enquiries you can contact us at [collective-action@uu.nl](mailto:collective-action@uu.nl).

Selected participants will be informed before the 10th of September. All selected paper presenters are expected to deliver their papers 2 weeks in advance to René van Weeren at [collective-action@uu.nl](mailto:collective-action@uu.nl), in order to allow all participants sufficient time to prepare the meeting. All submitted papers will be posted online on the conference website. Details about the possibility to attend the conference without presenting a paper will be made available at the [conference website](#) at a later stage.

This conference is organised in cooperation with the Knowledge Centre *Institutions for the Open Society*, the *Center for Global Economic History* and the *Center for Humanities* and is also made possible by funding from the European Research Council under the European Community's Seventh Framework Programme (FP7/2007-2013)/ERC grant agreement n° 240928) as part of the project "'United we stand". The dynamics and consequences of institutions for collective action in pre-industrial Europe' and funding from the Dutch Council for Scientific Research (NWO) for the project 'Common Rules. The regulation of institutions for managing commons in Europe, 1100 – 1800'. For information on both projects, see: <http://www.collective-action.info/ PRO Main>.

Tine De Moor ([t.demoor@uu.nl](mailto:t.demoor@uu.nl)), Miguel Laborda Pemán ([m.labordapeman@uu.nl](mailto:m.labordapeman@uu.nl)), and René van Weeren ([r.vanweeren1@uu.nl](mailto:r.vanweeren1@uu.nl))